

afford a delay in sending the current bill to the resident, a strong argument can be made that both miners and mill workers should have the same standard of eligibility for compensation. I will work with the Senator in an expeditious manner to address this issue and make any necessary amendment.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank my colleague and once again commend him for his outstanding work on this issue.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate is passing S. 1515, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2000, and sending it to President Clinton for his signature into law. I want to congratulate the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator HATCH, and the Senator from New Mexico, Senator BINGAMAN, for their leadership on this bill.

During the Senate Judiciary Committee consideration of this legislation last year, I offered an amendment on behalf of Senator BINGAMAN to add the category of renal disease affecting uranium miners to the coverage of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act. I am pleased to report that our amendment has been retained in the final version of this legislation. I know that Senator BINGAMAN sought higher compensation levels for radiation exposure victims in his original legislation, but has agreed to this bipartisan compromise to ensure the bill's final passage into law this year and to expedite compensation to radiation exposure victims in New Mexico.

I want to commend Senator HATCH and Senator BINGAMAN for a job well done.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, and others, to recognize we are passing S. 1515, which makes long overdue improvements to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990.

Mr. President, RECA was originally enacted in 1990 as a means of compensating the individuals who suffered from exposure to radiation as a result of the U.S. government's nuclear testing program and federal uranium mining activities. While the government can never fully compensate for the loss of a life or the reduction in the quality of life, RECA serves as a cornerstone for the national apology Congress extended to those adversely affected by the various radiation tragedies. In keeping with the spirit of that apology, the legislation the Senate is passing today will further correct existing injustices and provide compassionate compensation for those whose lives and health were sacrificed as part of our nation's effort to win the Cold War. While this bill does not go as far as the bill I originally introduced in the Senate this Congress, I am pleased that we have been able to take these important steps to begin to compensate our citizens for the sacrifices they made.

During the period of 1947 to 1961, the Federal Government controlled all aspects of the production of nuclear fuel. One of these aspects was the mining of

uranium in New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Wyoming and Utah. Even though the Federal Government had adequate knowledge of the hazards involved in uranium mining, these miners, many of whom were Native Americans, were sent into inadequately ventilated mines with virtually no instruction regarding the dangers of ionizing radiation. These miners had no idea of those dangers. Consequently, they inhaled radon particles that eventually yielded substantial doses of ionizing radiation. As a result, these miners have a substantially elevated cancer rate and incidence of incapacitating respiratory disease. The health effects of uranium mining in the fifties and sixties remain the single greatest concern of many former uranium miners and millers and their families and friends.

In 1990, I was pleased to co-sponsor the original RECA legislation to provide compassionate compensation to uranium miners. I believe that our efforts in 1990 were well intentioned but have not proven to be as effective as we had hoped in providing redress to those individuals who suffered the effects of working in uranium mines or mills or transporting the ore. The government has the responsibility to compensate all those adversely affected and who have suffered health problems because they were not adequately informed of the risks they faced while mining, milling, and transporting uranium ore.

Now we are getting ready to pass this comprehensive amendment to RECA to correct omissions, make RECA consistent with current medical knowledge, and to address what have become administrative horror stories for the claimants. With passage of this bill, we're now a Presidential signature away from offering compensation to thousands more uranium workers than ever.

Mr. President, the success of this bill is due in large part to Paul Hicks, who stood up for uranium workers, and strongly encouraged Congress to do the right thing by passing this bill. Paul was President of the Uranium Workers of New Mexico, and his passing just two months ago makes today's action bittersweet. But I hope his family can take comfort in the fact that he made a tremendously positive impact on the lives of thousands of uranium workers.

Mr. President, I am appreciative of all the hard work done on this bill by Senator HATCH and others, and I hope the President will sign this bill as soon as possible so that justice will be delayed no longer.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate agree to the amendment of the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—S. 2808

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I understand that S. 2808 is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2808) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to temporarily suspend the Federal fuels tax.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading, and I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will be read the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2000

Mr. BROWNBACK. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 29. I further ask that on Thursday, immediately following the prayer, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate then resume consideration of H.R. 4762, the disclosure bill under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. BROWNBACK. For the information of all Senators, on Thursday the Senate will resume consideration of the disclosure bill at 9:30 a.m. Under the previous order, there will be closing remarks on the bill with a vote on final passage to occur at approximately 9:40 a.m. Under the order, a vote in relation to the Frist amendment to the Labor-HHS appropriations bill will immediately follow the disposition of the disclosure bill.

As a reminder, there is a finite list of amendments to the Labor appropriations bill. Those Senators who have amendments on the list should work with the bill managers on a time to offer their amendments during tomorrow's session. Final passage on the bill is expected to occur by midafternoon.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:32 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, June 29, 2000, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate June 28, 2000:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

DONALD MANCUSO, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, VICE ELEANOR HILL.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

KENNETH Y. TOMLINSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 31, 2006, VICE HENRY J. CAUTHEN, TERM EXPIRED.